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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 33 | Min 23 | Humidity 47% Partly Cloudy Sensex 80,218 | Nifty 24,328 | Gold 95,861 | Silver 96,360 | Dollar 85.25 | Euro 96.88 | GBP 113.99

RAW DEAL

Sorry to burst your bubble, but police has issued warning too: If a deal is too good to be true, it probably is not true

PAGE 3

SOUND ON

Decibel levels in residential areas and silent zones in the city much higher now than the levels before the lockdown in 2020

PAGE 4

After citizens' objections pour in over proposal to cut 350+ trees at Cantonment Railway Colony premises, BBMP plans to hold public consultation meetings for any project that calls for felling of 50+ trees

PLEASE LEAVE YOUR AXE OUTSIDE

Activists want civic agency to not keep number of trees as only criterion

Garima Prasher
garima.prasher
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

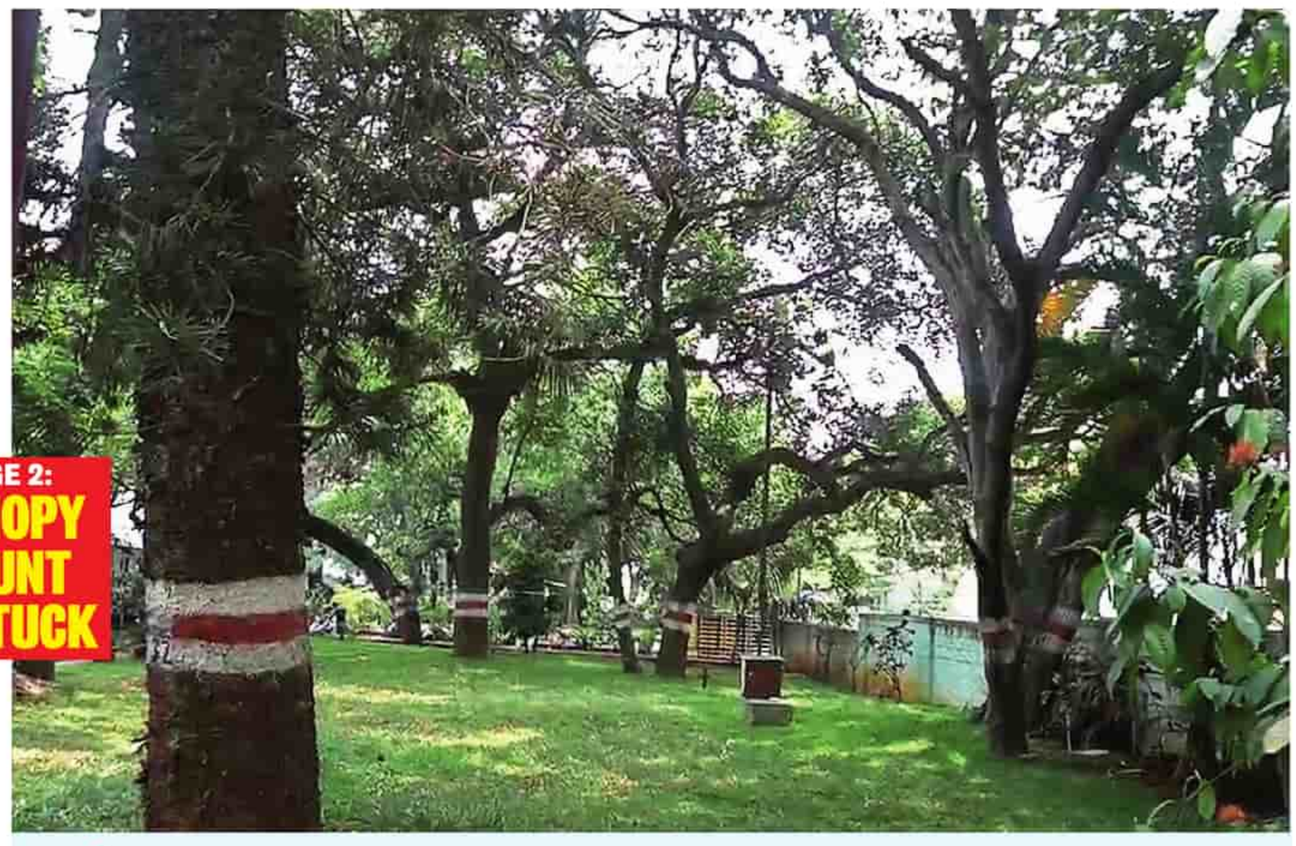
Going forward, the Forest Department of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) will hold public consultation meetings for every development project in the city that requires felling of more than 50 trees.

The decision has been taken after an overwhelming number of objections raised by Bengalureans in response to BBMP's recent public notice on a proposal to cut more than 350 trees on the Cantonment Railway Colony campus by the Ministry of Railways for a commercial project.

According to BLG Swamy, Deputy Conservator of Forests, BBMP, the only criterion for holding public consultations will be objections filed by citizens.

"Here on, we will have public consultation for every project that requires cutting down more than 50 trees and has received a considerable number of objections from the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »



PAGE 2: CANOPY COUNT IS STUCK

"There is public cynicism due to apathy on the part of officials. Regular public consultations for projects involving the removal of trees will restore some faith and will also lead to better participation

—Dattatreya Devare, Bangalore Environment Trust

Pipe trick

Eatery owner happily diverts drinking water from Namma Clinic for cleaning purposes

Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Roadside eateries are supposed to obtain licences from the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) authorities. And it is the responsibility of the BBMP Health Department to inspect whether roadside eateries are maintaining hygiene. It is the responsibility of the authorities to ensure that no one misuses facilities and amenities meant for public purposes.

Having said that, at Indiranagar 1st Stage is a strange sight: Drinking water meant for patients who visit Namma Clinic here is being diverted in a pipe by an eatery owner. The drinking water is being used to clean dishes at the eatery.

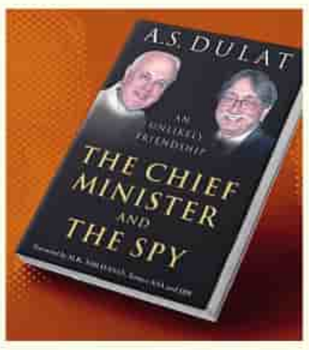
Residents of the area told BM the eatery owner has been drawing water from the Namma Clinic premises with the water pipe for a while now. They questioned the apathy of Namma Clinic staff and blamed them for allowing the eatery owner to draw water illegally.

"I was shocked to see the eatery owner drawing water from the Namma Clinic premises. The eatery owner should make arrangements to store water that can be used to clean vessels.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Untold stories



BIC is organising a discussion for the book 'The Chief Minister and The Spy', where the author will be in conversation with Karthik Venkatesh.
Where: Bangalore International Centre, Domlur;
When: April 30, 6.30 pm

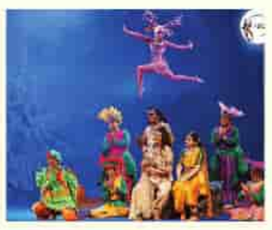
02 Poetic path

New Acropolis is organising 'The Way of Heart: Living Rumi's wisdom in our times', a journey into the teachings of Rumi.
Where: New Acropolis, Jayanagar;
When: April 29, 7.30 pm

03 Existential art

Artisera is presenting 'KARTAB', Gurmeet Marwah's first-ever solo exhibition, featuring paintings, woodcuts, and sculptures. Through his artworks, Gurmeet compels viewers to pause, reflect, and question the unseen forces at play in their existence.
Where: Artisera, Indiranagar;
When: April 12 to May 4

04 Theatrical magic



Academy of Music and Nrithya Rangoli Festival present Rama Katha Vismaya, a broadway-style grand spectacle that brings together 60 talented artists and cutting-edge techniques to create an immersive experience unlike any other.
Where: Chowdiah Memorial Hall, Malleshwaram;
When: May 17 and 18, 6.30 pm

05 Soulful symphony

A concert is being organised featuring legendary singer Hariharan and globally renowned flute virtuoso Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia.
Where: Courtyard, Phoenix Marketcity;
When: May 4, 7 pm

Tree enumeration for census stalled in multiple zones

Apart from contractor delays, reasons such as manpower shortage, technical glitches, and delay in paperwork are attributed for deferral

Garima Prasher
garima.prasher
@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Bengaluru's tree census is facing yet another setback as the project is getting stalled in Mahadevapura, RR Nagar, and Bengaluru South due to slow progress made by the contractor.

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is now in the process of floating new tenders to carry out tree enumeration in these areas.

"Tenders have been floated for Mahadevapura, RR Nagar, Bengaluru South, after the process was going at a slow pace in these zones. Once work orders are issued, enumeration will begin shortly," said a BBMP source.

Given the current scenario, the census outcome is expected to be delayed further.

BBMP sources said that while 80% of the census process is completed in Dasarahalli and Bommanahalli zones, it is trailing in Yelahanka as well. "Nearly 30% of the work in Yelahanka is completed. Although trees in areas with lower tree density are already enumerated, the intense summer that the city is facing is hampering work. Work is happening mostly on cloudy days. Enumerating all trees in Yelahanka will take at least a month more," said a source.

BBMP set the ball rolling and began Bengaluru's much-awaited tree census in February 2024 with a fund allocation of a little over Rs 3.74 crore, after a delay of nearly five years. The census, initially expected to be completed by August 2024, was postponed to November but faced further delays as the civic agency cancelled tenders for Mahadevapura, Dasarahalli, and Yelahanka due to contractor slowdowns.

Delay in completion has also been attributed to reasons such as shortage of manpower, technical glitches in the digital application developed to record the census, and delay in paperwork.

Notably, after the High Court directed the Palike to carry out Bengaluru's tree census in August 2019 as per the provisions of the Karnataka Preservation of Trees Act, 1976, the civic agency had first reached out to Institute of Wood Science and Technology (IWST) and then to Gandhi Krishi Vigyana Kendra (GKVK) in 2023 to conduct the survey. However, the idea to rope in a research institute was dropped after the civic agency decided to float a tender for the project.

Given the current scenario, the tree census outcome is expected to be delayed further

BBMP sources said that while 80% of the census process is completed in Dasarahalli and Bommanahalli zones, it is trailing in Yelahanka as well

Private schools get one-time relief

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After repeated warnings of legal action against unauthorised private schools, the government has now opened a window for their regularisation. Now, private schools that have been operating without recognition or renewal during 2023-24 or earlier years can submit applications to obtain recognition or renewal for the pending period. The Education Department, however, does not have an official estimate of how many such schools are functioning across the state. As per regulations, private schools must operate only after obtaining government recognition and must renew it periodically. Schools that continue operations without renewal are considered illegal, putting students' academic futures at risk. Acknowledging this, the government has extended a one-time opportunity for such schools to regularise their status. "Failure to secure recognition or renewal even now will result in the cancellation of their registration," said an official. While this move is seen as a student-friendly initiative, education experts caution that care must be taken to prevent unauthorised and substandard institutions from gaining legitimacy through this process. "The government's decision is welcome in the interest of students. But utmost care must be taken to ensure that unauthorised institutions are not legitimised," said D Shashikumar, General Secretary of Associated Managements of English Medium Schools in Karnataka (KAMS).

-BMB

Sanjay Gandhi Institute to launch a Bone Bank

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The Sanjay Gandhi Institute of Trauma and Orthopaedics will soon establish a Bone Bank, aimed at addressing the rising demand for bone grafts in critical medical treatments.

Set up in collaboration with the Department of Medical Education, preparations for the Bone Bank are already underway. The facility is being developed at a cost of approximately Rs 1.8 crore. Currently, patients requiring bone grafts are dependent on other institutions.

The Sanjay Gandhi Institute, which sees about 250 doctors and 300 patients daily, reports that nearly 50% of patients are admitted as inpatients. Every year, around 8-10 patients require bone graft surgeries.

Who can donate bones?

Bone donations are accepted only after obtaining consent from the deceased's family. Bones can be harvested from individuals aged between 18 and 60, provided they did not suffer from conditions like Hepatitis, HIV, or any other infectious diseases. Typically, bones are collected from individuals who die due to trauma or accidents.

The Sanjay Gandhi Institute sees about 250 doctors and 300 patients daily, with around 8–10 patients requiring bone graft surgeries annually

Need for awareness

"The Bone Bank will benefit not just our hospital, but other government and private hospitals too. However, due to lack of awareness about bone donation, securing sufficient bone material remains a challenge," said Dr Madan Ballal, Director of Sanjay Gandhi Institute. He said that with very few Bone Banks operating in the country, bone collection is significantly low, and there is an urgent need to raise awareness about bone donation.

Costly imports from abroad

Despite the presence of a few Bone Banks in India, sourcing all types of bones locally is not always possible. Some specialised bones are imported from abroad, particularly for cases like Sarcoma (bone cancer). "We often import bone from Italy via Colegine, which is a highly expensive and time-consuming process," said a specialist. The specialist said that although alternatives like steel or other metals can be used temporarily, they do not last long and require frequent replacements, making them inconvenient. The specialist highlighted that having a world-class Bone Bank locally would drastically cut down treatment costs. "Maintaining a Bone Bank is expensive and is not a profit-making venture. Yet, it is essential that we maintain high-quality standards for a long time. Karnataka, and even India, urgently needs a model Bone Bank," the specialist added.

'Too good to be true' deals? Think twice, warn police

Police officials urge citizens to verify websites, read reviews, avoid direct bank transfers, and be sceptical of massive discounts

Scammers often create time-sensitive offers, warning buyers of low stocks to rush decisions

Sanjana CS
c-sanjana.s@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

In an era where a few taps on a smartphone can deliver everything from a meal to a car at your doorstep, the Bengaluru Cyber Crime Division has issued a fresh advisory, warning users that online deals that seem too good to be true likely are, and could be a scam.

The advisory comes amidst a surge in cyber fraud cases where criminals lure unsuspecting victims with unbelievably cheap deals on high-end gadgets, and luxury items such as iPhones. Officials said that these 'too good to be true' deals often conceal elaborate scams designed to steal money, personal information, or even identities. According to police data, in the past three months, Bengaluru has witnessed a rise in cybercrime complaints related to fake online sales. During this period, there were 7 cases of advertising fraud, 24 cases involving gifts, iPhones, or lottery scams, and 80 cases linked to social media fraud. High-demand items like iPhones, gaming consoles, and designer handbags are commonly used as bait to lure victims. "An offer promising an iPhone 15 for just Rs 9,999 may sound exciting, but once you pay, there's no delivery, no refund, only disappointment," said Bengaluru Police Commissioner B Dayananda, in an awareness video. He urged people to always verify websites before making a purchase, use secure payment methods, and avoid sending money to unknown accounts. "When in doubt, opt for cash on delivery. Never share personal information like Aadhaar, PAN, or OTP unless it's a trusted platform. If you fall victim to a scam, don't stay silent, report it immediately by calling 1930 or visiting cybercrime.gov.in," he said.

Recently, a 24-year-old student from RT Nagar, lost nearly Rs 1.1 lakh in an online scam while trying to buy an iPhone.

A police official warned that scammers are becoming increasingly sophisticated, creating websites and advertisements that appear highly professional and authentic. "They prey on human emotions like excitement, greed, and urgency. Before you realise it, you've paid for a product that will never arrive, or worse, compromised your bank details. Fraudsters rely on the fact that people let their guard down when faced with a golden opportunity," said the official.

> **An offer promising an iPhone 15 for just Rs 9,999 may sound exciting, but once you pay, there's no delivery, no refund, only disappointment**
>
> —B Dayananda, Bengaluru Police Commissioner

In another recent case, 29-year-old Priya S, a marketing executive, stumbled upon a social media advertisement offering a brand-new iPhone 15 at half its market price. Enticed, she clicked through, interacted with a 'representative' via WhatsApp, and made a payment of Rs 45,000. Yet, the phone never arrived.

Senior police officials said that scammers often create time-sensitive offers, warning buyers of low stocks to rush them. Police officials are urging citizens to follow a simple checklist before making online purchases- verify websites, read reviews, avoid direct bank transfers, and be sceptical of massive discounts. Most importantly, if something feels off, it probably is.

Train-snacking: Metro passenger fined

A woman commuter was fined Rs 500 for violating metro regulations while travelling from Madavara Metro Station to Magadi Road Metro Station. The penalty was imposed after she was caught eating inside the metro on April 26, 2025, an act prohibited under Bengaluru Metro rules. A fellow passenger had recorded the incident and shared the video on social media, prompting swift action. A Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) official said that the consumption of food and beverages is strictly banned within metro premises and aboard trains to ensure hygiene, prevent littering, and maintain a clean commuting environment. "We reiterate the importance of following metro rules, emphasising that Bengaluru Metro is a shared space where each passenger's cooperation is crucial for ensuring a comfortable and safe travel experience. The corporation urges all commuters to respect the guidelines and contribute towards preserving the metro's cleanliness and orderliness," the official said.

—BMB

Snakebite issue tackled

The Karnataka government has authorised all Deputy Commissioners (DC) across districts to review the audit of the snakebite related deaths and take necessary measures to ensure effective implementation of National Programme for Prevention and Control of Snakebite Envenoming (NPSE), officials said on Monday.

The move follows concerns raised by the health department, which stated that despite efforts to reduce the morbidity and mortality due to snakebite, the state "continues to face challenges in the implementation of the programme".

—PTI

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Installation of individual household connections, water meters, and related plumbing works.
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Civil construction including plastering, painting, and plumbing.
Road restoration and related tasks post infrastructure installation.
Project Locations
Belagavi
Hubli-Dharwad
Kalaburagi
Join Our Vendors' Meet
Meet our project team, understand scope and timelines, and explore collaboration opportunities.
Date : Saturday, 3rd May 2025
Time : 9.00 AM to 6.00 PM
Venue : Vivdus Hotel, 3#, Kumarakrupa Road, Madhav Nagar, Gandhi Nagar, Bengaluru – 560001
Registration & Inquiries Please contact :
Akshata - 78920 49847, Naveen - 89046 49918

Rules broken, sleep lost: Noise soars across city

Post-pandemic traffic surge and construction work blamed for rising decibel levels across Bengaluru

Garima Prasher
garima.prasher
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Rising urban traffic and construction activities contribute to growing noise pollution concerns in Bengaluru's residential and silence zones

Noise pollution levels in Bengaluru have worsened significantly compared to the pre-pandemic period. Decibel levels recorded by noise monitoring stations show that both residential areas and silence zones across the city are now much louder than they were before the 2020 lockdown.

In some residential areas, such as Domlur, noise pollution has risen by as much as 34% since 2020. According to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) guidelines, permissible sound levels in a silent zone are 50 dB during the day and 40 dB at night. However, current readings show alarming deviations: the RV College of Engineering (RVCE) station is recording average daytime noise levels above 60 dB, with nighttime levels nearing 70 dB. In S G Halli, a residential area, the nighttime noise level this March crossed 70 dB — a sharp jump from 52 dB recorded in March 2020. Similarly, in Mysuru Road's silent zone, nighttime noise has approached 70 dB compared to 52 dB in 2020.

Anti-noise activists attribute this spike mainly to the surge in vehicular traffic across the city. Residents are voicing concern as relentless traffic, especially during peak hours, is driving up decibel levels to unhealthy limits.

The Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) operates ten noise monitoring stations across Bengaluru, covering silence zones, residential, commercial, and industrial areas. While decibel levels in commercial and industrial zones generally remain within permissible limits, readings from silence zones and residential areas have been worryingly high.

> **"Noise during early mornings and late nights is a major issue. Builders often ignore the Karnataka High Court's ban on night-time construction and BBMP's bylaw against nighttime work**
>
> –A Domlur resident

The KSPCB monitors noise levels at two designated silence zones — Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health (NIMHANS) and RVCE — and three residential areas — the TERI office in Domlur, BTM Layout, and Nisarga Bhavan in Basaveshwaranagar.

Experts also highlight construction activity as a growing contributor to the city's noise pollution. Builders routinely flout rules banning nighttime construction, with tipper trucks and heavy vehicles operating around the clock, even in residential neighbourhoods. The ongoing water shortage has added to the noise burden, with water tankers now playing continuously across many areas.

"Noise levels during early mornings and late nights are a major concern here," said a Domlur resident. "Most builders blatantly disregard the Karnataka High Court's ban on night-time construction, as well as BBMP's bylaw prohibiting construction activities during nighttime hours."

BMRCL orders additional metro coaches for Pink Line network expansion

The Pink Line gears up for a 2026 launch with 42 new CBTC-enabled coaches, ensuring smoother operations and fewer delays

Metro trains at a city station as authorities gear up for future network expansions

To address the shortage of trains and ensure smooth operations for Phase-2 metro expansions, BMRCL has signed an agreement with BEML to procure 42 additional coaches (equivalent to seven trains) for the upcoming Pink Line. The 405-crore deal aims to prevent train shortages when the Pink Line becomes operational in 2026.

The operational Purple and Green Lines are currently facing a shortage of trains, which has also delayed the launch of the Yellow Line connecting to Electronic City. Anticipating similar challenges for the Pink Line between Kalena Agrahara and Nagawara (21.76 km), BMRCL has decided to augment its fleet. In 2023, BMRCL signed a major agreement with BEML to supply 318 coaches (53 trains) for the Blue Line (2A and 2B) connecting to Kempegowda International Airport, and the Pink Line. Of these, 96 coaches were initially earmarked for the Pink Line. To further strengthen the fleet, BMRCL has now extended the previous order to include seven more trains.

> **"This deal is one of the largest coach procurements for BMRCL, with new trains featuring driverless tech and advanced safety**
>
> –BMRCL official

A BMRCL official said, "This deal marks one of the largest coach procurement contracts for BMRCL. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has provided funding support of 3,177 crore for the project. The new coaches will feature the latest CBTC (Communications-Based Train Control) technology, enabling driverless operations, and will be built using austenitic stainless steel. Each six-coach train will have two air-conditioning systems per coach, advanced passenger information systems (PIS), high safety features, and superior interior designs."

As per the agreement, each newly added coach will cost 19.64 crore, compared to 29.99 crore per coach in the earlier tender, which included supply and 15 years of maintenance. For the Blue Line project alone, 96 coaches have been designated for the Central Silk Board–KR Puram (2A) section and 126 coaches for the KR Puram–Airport (2B) stretch. Additional features include Platform Screen Door System (PSDS) integration for enhanced safety, LCD route maps, and automatic electric doors. The coaches will be manufactured at BEML's Metro Rail Shed in Bengaluru, further boosting the city's metro infrastructure, BMRCL official added.

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Problems in your area?
Send us a picture along with specific details. And please, no phone calls or spamming

Green abuse
Iyengar Road

Most trees along BVK Iyengar Main Road near the Electrical Market are tightly surrounded by cement, leaving them with little to no breathing space.

Waste nuisance
Tharagupet

An oil mill on 4th Main Road in New Tharagupet is dumping waste into the public road, creating a serious health hazard for residents and commuters.

Dangerous footpath
Residency Road

On Residency Road, sunken footpath tiles have created a pothole, causing frequent accidents. Several pedestrians have tripped and fallen, sustaining injuries. The patchwork repair done 2.5 months ago was of poor quality, highlighting the need for better materials and oversight.

Basketball court by day, tipplers' field by night

Citizens complain of unclean state of Victory Ground, with garbage, plastic bottles, cups, and empty liquor bottles strewn all around; demand authorities keep strict vigil

KAUSHIK JN

Liquor bottles, plastic bottles, and wrappers strewn in and around the basketball court premises

Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Residents of Indiranagar 1st stage, especially parents who accompany their children attending basketball coaching at Victory Ground, have been complaining about the misuse of the basketball court by drunkards and miscreants. They said that the basketball court and Victory Ground have become frequent spots for late-night drinking.

Residents have expressed frustration over repeatedly reporting the poor condition of the basketball court and Victory Ground to the authorities. "I am not happy with the unhygienic atmosphere here. One can find empty plastic bottles and liquor bottles. The authorities should ensure the basketball court premises are free from garbage," said Veena, one of the parents accompanying children to the basketball coaching.

Expressing a similar opinion, Nalini, a parent, said that the place has become a blackspot. She stated that the basketball court premises are unclean, with garbage, plastic bottles, cups, and empty liquor bottles becoming a frequent sight.

"The child play area is being used as an open urinal, and is stinky. How do you expect children to utilise the play equipment in such an unhygienic atmosphere? I have complained to the authorities but in vain," said Nalini.

A coach from the area said that it is a struggle to keep the basketball court premises clean and neat. "The more we try to keep the place clean, the more miscreants create nuisance at night," the coach said.

> **"How do you expect children to utilise the play equipment in such an unhygienic atmosphere? I have complained to the authorities but in vain** — Nalini, a parent

A few residents suggest that police could keep a vigil on miscreants and drunkards, given the proximity of Indiranagar Police Station to Victory Ground. "It may not be difficult for police to nab the miscreants who misuse the basketball court and the Victory Ground at night," said a resident.

K Govindaraj, President of Karnataka Olympic Association, said that the government has a plan to construct a stadium at the basketball court premises.

"Groundbreaking ceremony will be held shortly. The proposed stadium will have all facilities," he said.

CRIME FILES

Man abducted, murdered, body dumped in park

A 42-year-old man was kidnapped after being chased and assaulted in Nelamangala. The victim, Dileep Kumar, a resident of Kudlur village in Magadi, was later found dead in Jayapura plains, Tumakuru district.

According to police, the crime was allegedly orchestrated by Dileep's second wife Amrutha's brother and his associates. CCTV footage captured Dileep being chased by a group wielding sticks near the busy Nelamangala bus stand, moments after he had ordered food at a nearby stall. The took him in a waiting car. They are said to have murdered him at an undisclosed location, and dumped his body in a park.

Dileep had arrived at the bus stand with Amrutha and his two children from his first marriage. Following the incident, Amrutha lodged a complaint at the Nelamangala Town police station. Police visited the crime scene, and the body was shifted to the Tumakuru district mortuary. Amrutha, after reviewing CCTV footage, identified one of the kidnappers as her brother. **BMB**

Woman murder: Three held

The KR Puram police have cracked the case of murder of a woman, whose body was found in her home on April 20. Police have arrested three individuals, Jagadish, Prabhakar, and Sushant .

Investigations revealed that Jagadish, the prime accused, murdered Tanushree after she allegedly pressured into marrying her. The two had met through social service activities and had grown close, even traveling together for work. Jagadish frequently visited her house, but tensions rose when Tanushree reportedly began forcing him to marry her.

Jagadish, with the help of his friends Prabhakar and Sushant, hatched a plan to kill her. On the night of April 17, they went to Tanushree's home, where he fatally stabbed her. After committing the crime, Jagadish fled to Tirupati. **BMB**

Stay order on action against Amnesty, Aakar Patel

The High Court issued an interim stay order on Monday against proceedings under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, concerning Amnesty International India Pvt Ltd (AIIPL) and its former director, journalist and author Aakar Patel.

Justice Hemant Chandangoudar, after notifying the Directorate of Enforcement, stated, "Ld counsel for the petitioners submits that a coordinate bench of this court in Criminal Petition No 2508/2024 (G Ananthapadmanabhan) has granted interim order in favour A-3.

The allegations against accused no 1 and 4 are similar, interim order as prayed for so far as petitioners are concerned, till the next date of hearing." The petitioners sought to nullify the ED's complaint dated May 27, 2022, filed under sections 44,45(1),3,70,4 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002, and invalidate the special court's cognisance order dated June 2, 2022, against the petitioners, listed as accused no.1 and 4.

The ED initiated the money-laundering case after considering a CBI FIR that alleged violations of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 2010 and section 120B of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) regarding criminal conspiracy.

According to ED, Amnesty International India Foundation Trust (AIIFT) received FCRA permission in 2011-12 for accepting foreign contributions from Amnesty International, UK. After this permission was revoked, two entities, AIIPL and IAIT, were established in 2013-14 and 2012-13, allegedly to circumvent FCRA regulations. Amnesty India rejected these money-laundering allegations. **BMB**

SC/ST Act case against Infosys co-founder quashed

The High Court has dismissed a criminal case filed under the SC/ST Act against Infosys co-founder Kris Gopalakrishnan, former IISc director Balaram P and fourteen others.

Justice Hemant Chandangoudar dismissed the complaint by a former IISc faculty member, describing it as harassment following the complainant's service termination. The Court observed two similar criminal complaints had previously been dismissed, recognising them as civil disputes incorrectly presented as criminal matters. The latest complaint was found to contain largely identical allegations.

"The filing of a third complaint with similar allegations is clearly a vexatious attempt to harass the petitioners for having terminated the complainant's service, which was subsequently converted into resignation. Therefore, the dispute between the parties is essentially civil in nature, albeit presented with a criminal color," the April 16 ruling stated.

The Court nullified the latest criminal complaint, deeming it an abuse of legal process. The cancelled FIR was registered at Sadashiva Nagar police station in Bengaluru on January 28 following directions from the City Civil and Sessions Court. The complaint named 16 accused, including Gopalakrishnan.

A former IISc faculty member filed the private complaint, alleging caste discrimination before his termination. Gopalakrishnan served on IISc's governing council during the alleged incident. **BMB**

PU-2 registrations surge as students target high scores

More students aim for improved CET rankings with selective subject attempts

Sridhar.Vivan
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @sridharvMIRROR

The Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board (KSEAB) has commenced the Second PU Exam-2 from April 24, with a majority of students appearing to improve their previous results. Officials reported that 2,72,272 students have registered for the examination this year, a significant increase from last year's 1,49,300 candidates.

Science, commerce and arts stream registrations

Among the registered candidates, 1,21,519 are from the Science stream, 64,378 from Commerce, and 86,375 from Arts. Students have the option to retake exams in specific subjects where they wish to improve their scores. While the main Second PU exam requires students to appear for all subjects, the Second and Third exams offer flexibility, allowing candidates to focus only on subjects they aim to enhance.

Impact of multiple examination opportunities

Since last year, KSEAB has been offering three opportunities annually for second PU and SSLC students to take their exams. This move, officials said, has helped many students improve their marks and boosted their chances in competitive exams like the CET, where scores significantly impact rankings. However, educationists and parents have raised concerns about fairness, arguing that students appearing for selective subjects could skew the ranking system.

Students retake select subjects as multiple exam chances boost rankings

> **Students opting for selective subjects for improvement affects the fairness of ranking systems. Taking exams for all subjects will ensure equality for everyone**
>
> –Janardhan, a representative of parents

"Students opting for only a few subjects affects the fairness of rankings. Appearing for all subjects would ensure equality and uphold social justice for all candidates," said Janardhan, a representative of parents.

Boys outnumber girls in exam participation

This year, male students have outnumbered females across all streams. In Arts, 50,392 boys and 35,983 girls have registered, while Commerce has seen 39,185 boys and 25,193 girls. In Science, 64,378 boys and 58,119 girls are appearing.

Positive outlook for higher education admissions

Officials expressed optimism, stating that the increase in registrations reflects growing academic ambition. "Compared to last year, more students have registered this time. Additionally, better opportunities are now available in CET rankings," said H Basavarajendra, Chairperson of KSEAB.

HC orders SIT in drone data theft probe

The Karnataka High Court has formed a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe data theft and cyber-espionage allegations involving a drone manufacturing company that supplies to Indian security forces.

Justice M Nagaprasanna issued the order, stressing that the alleged offences touch upon matters of national defence and military technology. The court observed that standard investigative methods would not suffice in crimes of such scale and complexity, and highlighted the need for technical expertise. It said a Special Investigation Team was essential to ensure a thorough and competent probe into the sophisticated allegations.

The three-member SIT, led by Karnataka Director General of Police Pranab Mohanty, includes IPS officers Bhushan Gulab Rao Borase and Nisha James. The team has been directed to submit its findings within three months.

The court's decision came in response to a petition filed by Newspace Research and Technologies, a company that manufactures drones for the Indian Army, Navy, Air Force, DRDO, and other agencies. The firm alleged that some of its former employees had misused sensitive information including UAV source codes, designs, and defence technologies—to aid a rival company in securing government contracts.

During the hearing, the court found that despite the filing of a police complaint and earlier judicial directions, the investigation had made little progress. In one instance, an accused person was arrested but later only served with an appearance notice, undermining the need for custodial interrogation.

Raising concerns over the state of cybercrime investigations, the court noted that the slow pace was largely due to the lack of technical expertise among police officers. It cited public domain data, stating that the rate of charge sheet filing in cybercrime cases stands at a mere 9%, not because of a lack of evidence but due to inadequate investigative skills.

The court also directed the Karnataka government to ensure cyber command centres are operational and properly staffed. A copy of the order has been sent to the Chief Secretary, the Principal Secretary of the Home Department, and the state police chief for immediate implementation of paragraph No.13 [cyber command centres] of the order," the court concluded.

BM Trippin' Tales — Consumer Connect Initiative

Tourists raise alarm over creaky film set at Kyatanamakki

Sridhar.Vivan
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @sridharvMIRROR

Kyatanamakki, located in the district of Chikkamagaluru, is a hill station renowned for its stunning natural beauty. Surrounded by lush green hills, a misty atmosphere, and picturesque views, it is a dream destination for tourists seeking tranquillity and breathtaking scenery.

Rising to an elevation of 5,000 feet above sea level, the hills of Kyatanamakki offer an ideal escape from the hustle and bustle of city life. Dense forests, soothing winds, and panoramic vistas add to the charm of this serene destination.

Tourists visiting Kyatanamakki can enjoy a range of activities such as trekking, jeep rides, and biking. A 3-kilometre trekking trail winds through dense forests and rugged hills, offering an immersive nature experience. Jeep rides provide a thrilling journey through narrow, winding roads, while biking allows visitors to soak in the stunning landscape. The sunrise and sunset views are especially captivating, as the first rays of light bathe the misty hills in golden hues and the sunset paints the sky in vibrant colours.

However, safety concerns have recently come to light. A film set built on the hill for a song sequence has been abandoned and left to deteriorate. Tourists are now climbing onto the unstable structure to take photos and even dance, despite its weakened condition. The wooden planks and ropes used in its construction are deteriorating due to rain and weathering, making the site extremely dangerous. Visitors have raised concerns and urged authorities to dismantle the set before a serious accident occurs.

Tourists trek scenic Kyatanamakki, but unsafe film sets raise safety fears

Accessing Kyatanamakki requires travelling 31 kilometres from the nearest town, Kalsa. Although the route is narrow and winding, it offers scenic views of lush hills and dense forests, making the journey itself memorable. Travellers from Bengaluru must cover approximately 318 kilometres to reach the hill station. In the final stretch, vehicles must be parked by the roadside, and visitors must walk around 3 kilometres to reach the top. Jeep facilities are available, but many visitors prefer using their own vehicles or trekking to the summit.

Despite its popularity, Kyatanamakki lacks basic infrastructure and security arrangements. There are no proper toilet facilities, and no safety measures have been put in place to manage the growing number of tourists. Reports have surfaced of reckless behaviour, including bike racing and dangerous driving on the narrow paths, raising serious safety concerns. Some visitors have also been observed damaging the environment, which threatens the fragile beauty of the area.

Local residents and tourists alike are calling for better management of the site. Immediate steps, such as dismantling the abandoned film set, setting up basic amenities like toilets, and enforcing stricter rules to curb reckless activities, are crucial. Implementing these measures would help ensure the safety of visitors while preserving the natural charm that makes Kyatanamakki a treasured getaway.

Kyatanamakki remains a must-visit for nature lovers and adventure enthusiasts, offering a much-needed retreat from urban life. However, urgent attention to safety and conservation will be key to maintaining its allure for future generations.

PAHALGAM ATTACK

BJP questions Cong stance

The BJP on Monday latched on to a string of controversial remarks made by Congress leaders on the Pahalgam terror attack to hit out at the opposition party, which directed its members to either toe the party line or refrain from commenting on the sensitive issue.

The Congress also asserted that only a recent CWC resolution, along with the views expressed by party chief Mallikarjun Kharge, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and authorised AICC office-bearers, represents its position on the Pahalgam terror attack.

Twenty-six people, mostly tourists, were killed and several injured when terrorists opened fire at a meadow near the popular tourist town of Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag district on April 22.

The BJP questioned Kharge and Gandhi over the comments of several of their colleagues, some of whom have questioned the need for a war with Pakistan and the Pahalgam attack victims' account that the terrorists had marked out non-Muslims, asking if their call for national unity was merely a formality. **PTI**

China calls for swift probe

China on Monday said it welcomes all measures to "cool down" the current situation between India and Pakistan, including a "swift and fair investigation" into the Pahalgam terror attack, and expressed support for its all-weather ally in safeguarding its sovereignty and security.

"China welcomes all measures that are conducive to cooling down the current situation and supports an impartial investigation as soon as possible," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun told a media briefing here.

However, he evaded a direct response to a question whether Beijing will take part in the probe, as according to a Russian media report, Pakistan wanted China and Russia to be part of the investigation into the Pahalgam attack.

He also parried another question about fairness and credibility of any investigation, considering that Pakistan faced allegations of sponsoring cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. **PTI**

J&K Assembly condemns attack

The Jammu and Kashmir Assembly unanimously passed a resolution on Monday expressing shock and anguish over the Pahalgam terrorist attack and resolved to fight resolutely to defeat the nefarious designs to disturb communal harmony and hinder progress.

The resolution, moved by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary during a special session of the Assembly, was passed by voice vote. At the beginning of the session, House members observed a two-minute silence as homage.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who also holds the tourism portfolio, condemned the Pahalgam terror attack and admitted that he failed in his responsibility of ensuring a safe return for tourists. **PTI**

'Not only obscene, but also perverse'

SC notice to Centre on plea to ban sexually explicit content on OTT, social media

The Supreme Court on Monday called it an "important concern" and sought responses from the Centre and others on a plea seeking a ban on streaming of sexually explicit content on OTT and social media platforms.

INFOCUS OTT CONTENT

A bench of Justices BR Gavai and Augustine George Masih said it was either for the legislature or the executive to come out with measures to deal with the issue. "This is not within our domain. As it is, there is lot of allegation that we are encroaching upon the legislative and executive powers," Justice Gavai said in an apparent reference to recent attacks on the judiciary.

Court hearing plea seeking guidlines to stop obscene content online

Solicitor general Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, said the government would not take it as an adversarial litigation. "Kindly monitor it here. We will come out with something which balances the freedom of speech while (Article) 19 (2) is taken care of," he said.

Mehta said some of the contents were not only obscene but also "perverse".

Though some regulations in this regard were in existence, he said, certain more were in contemplation.

Advocate Vishnu Shankar Jain, appearing for the petitioners, said it was not an adversarial litigation and the plea raised a serious concern over such contents on over-the-top (OTT) and social media. Jain said such content was displayed without any checks or restrictions.

"Mr solicitor, you should do something," Justice Gavai told Mehta.

The law officer said children were more exposed to all this nowadays.

"Some of the things which are in regular programmes, the language, the contents... is of such a nature that it is not only vulgar, it is perverse," he said. Mehta said some of the content was so perverse even two respectable men couldn't sit and watch it together. He said the only condition was that such programmes were for viewers aged over 18 years but cannot be controlled.

The bench referred to the use of cell phones by children.

"They (children) are quite adept. It is a good thing, provided they reach the correct website," Mehta said.

When the bench offered to issue notice on the plea for responses from the Centre and others, including some OTT and social media platforms, Mehta said it may not be necessary to issue notice to others.

"Let them be before the court," Justice Gavai said, "as they also have some social responsibility".

"The present petition raises an important concern with regard to the display of various objectionable, obscene and indecent contents on OTT platforms and social media," it recorded in its order.

The bench was hearing a plea filed by five petitioners who sought guidelines to constitute an authority to prohibit online dissemination of obscene content. **PTI**

AROUNDTHEWORLD

Russia declares 72-hour ceasefire in Ukraine

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday declared a unilateral 72-hour ceasefire next week in Ukraine to mark Victory Day in World War II as the U.S. presses for a deal to end the 3-year-old war. Kyiv insisted on a longer and immediate truce.

The Kremlin said the truce, ordered on "humanitarian grounds," will run from the start of May 8 and last through the end of May 10 to mark Moscow's defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945 — Russia's biggest secular holiday. That timing translates to start at 2100 GMT, or 5 p.m. EDT, on May 7, lasting until 2100 GMT, or 5 p.m. EDT on May 10.

Ukraine, which has previously agreed to U.S. President Donald Trump's proposal of a full 30-day ceasefire, dismissed Putin's move as window dressing.

"If Russia truly wants peace, it must cease fire immediately," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said, according to the ministry. He emphasized that Kyiv is ready for a "lasting, reliable, and complete ceasefire" for at least 30 full days. **AP**

US airstrike kills 68: Houthi rebels

Yemen's Houthi rebels on Monday alleged a US airstrike hit a prison holding African migrants, killing at least 68 people and wounding 47 others. The U.S. military did not acknowledge carrying out the strike. The strike in Yemen's Saada governorate, a stronghold for the Houthis, is the latest incident in the country's decades long war to see African migrants from Ethiopia and other nations killed while crossing the nation for a chance to work in neighboring Saudi Arabia.

It also likely will renew questions from activists about the American campaign, known as "Operation Rough Rider," which has been targeting the rebels as the Trump administration negotiates with their main benefactor, Iran, over Tehran's rapidly advancing nuclear program. **AP**

Rafale effect

Rs **63,000**-crore deal: Government inks deal with France to purchase **26** Rafale Marine fighter jets for the Indian Navy.

9%: Defence stocks climb after strong rally on Monday

4.5%: Nifty Defence index rises

Gainers

17 out of its 18 constituents were in the positive territory, with notable gains from companies such as Paras Defence and Space Technologies, Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers and Data Patterns (India)

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) saw a rise of over **5.5%,** while Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders and Cochin Shipyard gained **4.77%** and **6.1%,** respectively.

Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) also experienced a notable increase by rising over **3.28%** during the session.

Delivery

The **26** Rafale-Marine jets for the Navy, manufactured by Dassault Aviation of France, are expected to be delivered within **37** to **65** months. The delivery of all the planes is scheduled to be completed by **2030-31.**

What all does it entail?

The Rafale procurement will include weapons, simulators, spares, associated ancillary equipment, crew training and logistics support for the Indian Navy from the French government. Besides, it includes indigenous manufacturing of components under offset obligations as part of the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative.

The fighter jets will be deployed on aircraft carriers INS Vikrant and INS Vikramaditya, strengthening the Navy's capability to counter threats in the Indian Ocean. **—IANS**

The importance of mature trees

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

public. User agencies will have to justify the removal of trees to the citizens," said Swamy.

City-based tree activists have welcomed the move. However, they say public consultations should be held for projects even in the city's outskirts. 'Number of objections' should not be the criterion.

"While it is a step forward, it should not be limited to projects that receive public attention due to various factors. Moreover, there is public cynicism due to apathy on the part of officials. Regular public consultations for projects involving the removal of trees will restore some faith and will also lead to better participation," said Dattatreya Devare, trustee of Bangalore Environment Trust.

BBMP swamped with objections

The public notice published by the Palike on April 25 regarding the removal of 368 trees for a 'commercial development project' at Bangalore Cantonment Railway Colony campus has perturbed hundreds of citizens and tree activists.

"We are flooded with objections from citizens against the project. Officials from the Forest Department have tried to understand the nature of the project, but the user agency has been secretive so far," said a BBMP official.

Citizens, through objections sent to BBMP, say that while they acknowledge the importance of development, the environmental cost of cutting down mature, fully-grown trees cannot be understated.

They have underlined that Bengaluru already faces severe air pollution and environmental degradation. The removal of 388 trees will only worsen the city's climate resilience and exacerbate pollution levels, further degrading the quality of life for residents.

"Mature trees play a critical role in the urban ecosystem. They mitigate air pollution, reduce urban heat island effects, and provide critical habitats for birds, insects, and other wildlife.

The trees in question are likely to be old-growth species that have provided a habitat for local biodiversity for decades. These trees contribute to maintaining ecological balance, and any removal will disrupt this balance, endangering local wildlife," said one of the citizens' objections.

In response to the notice, citizens also said that cutting down mature trees is directly at odds with the sustainability goals of the ongoing climate crisis. Instead of removing these trees, the focus should be on developing the project in a manner that coexists with nature.

According to Vijay Nishant, founder of Project Vruksha and a member of the Bengaluru Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC), the trees that have been proposed to be felled are heritage trees and should not be felled at any cost.

"Bengaluru is already witnessing a sizzling summer and urban heat island effect. The trees proposed to be felled are heritage trees that are also a testament to Bengaluru's rich natural heritage and history. If removed, the loss will be irreparable. This is an example of a project that should not be considered by the Tree Expert Committee," said Nishant.

City-based tree activists and citizens have thus urged BBMP to explore alternatives that would allow for development without compromising Bengaluru's environmental health.

"We request that this notice be reviewed with the environmental implications in mind, and that any action that might lead to the destruction of these trees be halted immediately.

Citizens' concerns must be taken into account before any final decisions are made. We are more than willing to engage in further discussions or explore alternative solutions that protect the environment while meeting development goals," noted another objection filed by a citizen.

96-year-old puppeteer conferred with Padma Shri

The 96-year-old puppeteer Bhimavva Doddabalappa Shillekyathara received the Padma Shri award from President Droupadi Murmu for her contribution to the field of Art.

The government announced the Padma Awards on the eve of the 76th Republic Day.

Shillekyathara has been a torchbearer for Togalu Gombeyaata (Leather) puppetry, the traditional shadow puppetry of Karnataka.

Padma Awards, one of the highest civilian Awards of the country, are conferred in three categories, namely, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri.

Famous Raagi and Shabad singer Bhai Harjinder Singh Ji also received the Padma Shri award from President Droupadi Murmu for his contribution to the field of Art.

The Awards are given in various disciplines/ fields of activities -- art, social work, public affairs, science and engineering, trade and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, civil service, etc.

'Padma Vibhushan' is awarded for exceptional and distinguished service; 'Padma Bhushan' for distinguished service of high order and 'Padma Shri' for distinguished service in any field. The awards are announced on the occasion of Republic Day every year.

American author and researcher known for his writing on Vedic culture and spirituality, Stephen Knapp received the Padma Shri award from President Droupadi Murmu for his contribution to the field of Literature and Education.

These Awards are conferred by the President of India at ceremonial functions, which are held at Rashtrapati Bhavan usually around March or April every year.

For the year 2025, the President has approved conferment of 139 Padma Awards including duo case (in a duo case, the Award is counted as one).

The list comprises 7 Padma Vibhushan, 19 Padma Bhushan and 113 Padma Shri Awards. 23of the awardees are women and the list also includes 10 persons from the category of Foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI, and 13 Posthumous awardees. **ANI**

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, Praveen V Kotwal, residing at Flat No.402, Siri Sangeeth, 18th Cross, Poorna Pragna Layout, Arehalli, Kodipur, AGS Layout, P.O Subramanyapura, Bengaluru 560061 I have changed my daughter name to SHRADDHA PRAVEEN KOTWAL from Nikita Praveen Kotwal, VIDE AFFIDAVIT DATED:17.04.2025 before notary S R THULASIKRISHNA, Bangalore

I, Praveen V Kotwal, residing at Flat No.402, Siri Sangeeth, 18th Cross, Poorna Pragna Layout, Arehalli, Kodipur, AGS Layout, P.O Subramanyapura, Bengaluru 560061 I have changed my daughter name to TEJASWINI PRAVEEN KOTWAL from Advika Praveen Kotwal, VIDE AFFIDAVIT DATED:23.04.2025 before notary S R THULASIKRISHNA, Bangalore

I Parvathi W/O Naik N Chandra Mohan, R/O No158A, Glass Factory Layout, Electricity, Bangalore. Have Changed My Name to N C Parvathi for all purposes

I, USHA KIRAN residing at B 311.Ortus 2, Temple Road, Amruthahalli, Bengaluru-560092.I have changed my name to USHA JANARDHAN CHAKATECHAL. Vide affidavit dated 28/04/2025 sworn before notary. S N MADHU Bangalore

I, Shobha Dhavaleshwar R/O C/O Anusuya H, D505, Renaissance Temple Bells, WOC Road, Rajajinagar, Bengaluru-560022, changed my name from Shobha Dhavaleswar to Shobha Dhavaleshwar for all future purposes.

I, VANI HEGDE, R/o Flat 701 6th Flr, B Block 15/2H 15/8 Aryan Opulence, Uttarahalli Main Road, Bangalore Karnataka Pin 560060, have changed my name to VANI RAMACHANDRA HEGDE, vide affidavit dated 25/04/2025, sworn before notary Venkataraju H G, Bangalore.

I, Shivalingappa Bashetteppa Dhavaleshwar R/O C/O Anusuya H, D505, Renaissance Temple Bells, WOC Road, Rajajinagar, Blr-560022, changed my name from Shivalingappa Dhavaleswar to Shivalingappa Bashetteppa Dhavaleshwar for all future purposes

I,JAYAKUMAR Niranjan, R/o No 1042 Sobha Sunscape, Sobha Hill View off Kanakapura road Thalaghattapura bangalore-560062, have changed my minor daughter's name from Sumana Niranjan Jayakumar Niranjan to SUMANA NIRANJAN vide affidavit dated: 24/04/2025

I, Rajesh Revankar, S/o Sadanand Revankar, R/o 442, 1st N block, 1st C Main Road,Near Jai Apartment, Rajajinagar, Bangalore 560010, have changed my name to Rajesh S Revankar

I, MOHAMMED NADEEM S/o AMANULLA ABDUL MUNAF SAHEB, R/o No.15, HBR Layout 4th Block, Bangalore - 560043, Changed my Father's Name to AMANULLA.

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KASHI AYODHYA/BADRI KEDAR* 14*/21 DAYS
May 21, 28* June: 2, 8, 9* 15*,19, 25, 26* July: 2 Sept: 5*

AMARNATH SRINAGAR VAISHNODEVI 14/8*/6** DAYS
Jun: 30, July: 2, 3*, 4, 5* ,5**,6, 7* ,7**, 8, 9*, 9**, 10, 11** 13**

KASHMIR WITH LADAKH 12 DAYS
June: 5, 17, 26

KASHI AYODHYA GAYA/HARIDWAR* 11/16* DAYS
May: 21, 24* Jun: 1*, 2, 8, 8* 15*, 19, 22*, 25, 26*

TRICHY RAMESHWARAM KANYAKUMARI 5/7*/10**DAYS
MAY: 1, 3**, 4*, 6, 11, 16, 21, 23**, 26

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Free-for all scene at Namma Clinic

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

It is wrong to misuse water meant for patients. The authorities must take action against the Namma Clinic staff for being negligent or colluding with the eatery owner," said a resident on the condition of anonymity.

Demanding the BBMP remove all the eateries put up at parking spaces and footpaths, DV Ashok, a resident of Indiranagar 1st Stage, said that the authorities concerned must keep footpaths free from all types of encroachments. "I do not know how the BBMP authorities allowed the eatery owner to draw water from the Namma Clinic premises. The eatery owner should not be allowed to do business here as it creates a black spot," said Ashok.

Meanwhile, the eatery owner said that he has been keeping the place near and clean. "It is true that I misused the water facility at the Namma Clinic premises. I will not draw water from the clinic premises in the future," he said.

When contacted, Dr Manjula, Medical Officer, BBMP, said that she has already directed the staff to remove the water tap to avoid misuse of water.

"The staff fixed the water tap on the back side of the Namma Clinic to clean the place. Some drunkards misuse the vacant space at night. They also use the space to attend nature's call," said Dr Manjula.

PEEL-GOOD FACTOR

Is there best way to peel boiled egg? Food scientist explains

We've all been there – trying to peel a boiled egg, but mangling it beyond all recognition as the hard shell stubbornly sticks to the egg white. Worse, the egg ends up covered in chewy bits of adhesive membrane in the end.

The internet is littered with various "hacks" that claim to prevent this problem. But there are several reasons why eggs can be hard to peel. Luckily, that means there are also science-based strategies we can use to avoid the problem.

Egg 'peelability' factors

Eggs consist of a hard, porous shell, an inner and outer membrane, the egg white (albumen), and a membrane-encased yolk at the centre. There is also an air cell between the inner and outer membrane next to the shell.

A lot of research was done in the late 1960s and 1970s on factors that affect the peelability of eggs after they've been boiled.

One of these factors is the pH of the egg white. An early study from the 1960s indicated that the pH of the egg white needs to be in the range of 8.7–8.9, quite alkaline, in order for the egg to be easier to peel.

Storage temperature has a role to play, too. A study from 1963 showed that storing eggs at about 22 degrees Celsius (or 72 degrees Fahrenheit) gives a better peelability result than storage at lower temperatures of 13°C, or even fridge temperatures at 3–5°C.

Of course, there is a risk of spoilage if eggs are stored at higher ambient temperatures.

In the studies, an increase in storage time before boiling – using less fresh eggs – also increased the ease of peelability.

Step one: avoid fresh eggs

The fact that fresh eggs are harder to peel is relatively well known. Based on the factors above, there are a couple of reasons for this.

For one, in a fresh egg the air cell is still quite small. As the egg ages, it (very) slowly loses moisture through the porous shell, increasing the size of the air cell while the rest of the egg contents shrink. A bigger air cell makes it easier to start the peeling action.

Additionally, egg whites, although they already start out relatively alkaline, increase in pH as the eggs age, also making them easier to peel.

Step two: water temperature

Some keen egg boiling pundits believe that starting off with boiling water and lowering it to a simmer before gently placing the eggs into it provides a better result. However, you want to do this with room temperature eggs to avoid them cracking due to a sudden temperature change.

The reasoning behind this approach is that exposure to higher temperatures from the start of cooking also makes it easier for the membrane to come away from the shell and egg white.

Furthermore, the quick hot start makes it easier for the egg white proteins to denature (change structure as they cook) and bond to each other, rather than to the membrane.

After boiling eggs for the desired amount of time (typically 3–5 minutes for runny yolks, 6–7 minutes for jammy yolks, and 12–15 minutes for hard boiled), you can quench them in ice water. This should help the egg white to slightly shrink away from the shell, improving peelability.

Step three (optional): adding things to the water

Some other suggestions to improve peelability include adding salt to the boiling water, but this has mixed results. In one study, this approach did actually improve peelability, but this effect was lost after eggs had been stored for longer periods.

Acids and alkali have also been shown to aid eggshell peelability or removal. The patent that describes this used rather harsh substances with the goal to dissolve away the shell.

But based on this idea, you could try adding baking soda or vinegar to the water. With vinegar, the theory is that it attacks the calcium carbonate in the eggshell to then aid its removal. As for baking soda, because it's alkaline, it could help detach the membrane from the shell.

Bonus: alternative cooking methods

There are other methods for hard-cooking eggs, such as pressure steaming, air-frying and even microwaving.

In steaming eggs, some proponents theorise that water vapour permeates the eggshell, loosening the membrane from the egg white, and thereby making the egg much easier to peel.

While studies have recently been done on the air-frying of other foods, there is still scope to further understand how this style of cooking might affect eggshells and peelability.

Lastly, once you have successfully separated the eggshells, don't just throw them in the bin. There are lots of different uses for them, including compost, slug and snail deterrent in your garden, using them as little biodegradable pots for seedlings, or even something as advanced as scaffolds for cancer research.

(By Paulomi (Polly) Burey, University of Southern Queensland, The Conversation)

MIRRORLIGHTS

Covid-19 vaccines have no lasting impact on metabolic health: Study

Covid-19 vaccines do not cause significant metabolic changes, easing concerns about potential long-term side effects, according to a study on Monday.

The research led by researchers from Murdoch University in Australia followed 33 participants over 480 days, tracking 167 metabolic markers across 28 time points, Xinhua news agency reported. The results showed no meaningful impact on key health indicators, including inflammatory markers, cardiovascular risk factors, and molecules involved in energy metabolism.

"This real-world study shows that Covid-19 vaccines are safe and don't cause significant metabolic changes," said lead author Ruey Leng Loo, Associate Professor at the varsity. "Our findings help counter misinformation and support confidence in vaccination," Loo said.

Published in the Journal of Molecular Medicine, the research compared vaccinated participants with a control group who had never contracted Covid, as well as individuals who had experienced mild infections.

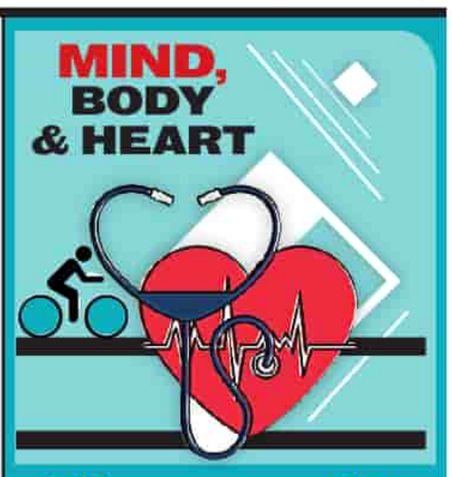
The metabolic profiles of vaccinated individuals closely matched those of the control group, further indicating that vaccines do not trigger major biological shifts, the study said. Metabolic markers, including 34 cytokines, 112 lipoproteins, and 21 low-molecular-weight metabolites, remained largely stable post-vaccination.

While a slight, temporary increase in the inflammation-related marker Chemokine IP10 was observed after the third dose, levels remained within the normal range and returned to baseline before subsequent vaccinations, Loo said. In contrast, even mild Covid infections were found to cause more pronounced metabolic disruptions than vaccination, she said. The expert noted that multiple doses do not produce the same biological disturbances seen after infection.

"While mild SARS-CoV-2 infections can cause more pronounced metabolic changes, the temporary fluctuations we observed after each vaccination were minor in comparison," Loo said.

"These findings offer further reassurance to those hesitant about vaccination, demonstrating that multiple doses do not cause the same biological responses as the Covid-19 infections.

Although the results are promising, the team stressed the need for further research with larger and more diverse groups. —IANS



All you need to know about...

Ultra-processed foods

Risk of early death

Do you regularly eat ready-to-eat-or-heat foods? Beware, a global study on Monday showed that the consumption of such ultra-processed foods (UPFs) can significantly increase the risk of preventable premature deaths.

Call to reduce UPF consumption

Previous studies have linked UPFs -- rich in sodium, trans fats, and sugar -- with 32 different diseases including cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes, some types of cancer, and depression.

The new study analysed data from nationally representative dietary surveys and mortality data from eight countries (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, United Kingdom, and the US).

The findings published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine, show that premature deaths attributable to consumption of UPFs increase significantly according to their share in individuals' total energy intake. The study reinforces the call for global action to reduce UPF consumption, supported by regulatory and fiscal policies that foster healthier environments.

What are UPFs?

UPFs are ready-to-eat-or-heat industrial formulations made with ingredients extracted from foods or synthesised in laboratories, with little or no whole foods in their composition.

"UPFs affect health beyond the individual impact of the high content of critical nutrients (sodium, trans fats, and sugar) because of the changes in the foods during industrial processing and the use of artificial ingredients, including colourants, artificial flavours, and sweeteners, emulsifiers, and many other additives and processing aids, so assessing deaths from all-causes associated with UPF consumption allows an overall estimate of the effect of industrial food processing on health," said lead investigator Eduardo AF Nilson, from the University of Sao Paulo in Brazil. —IANS

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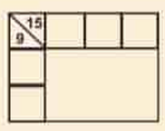
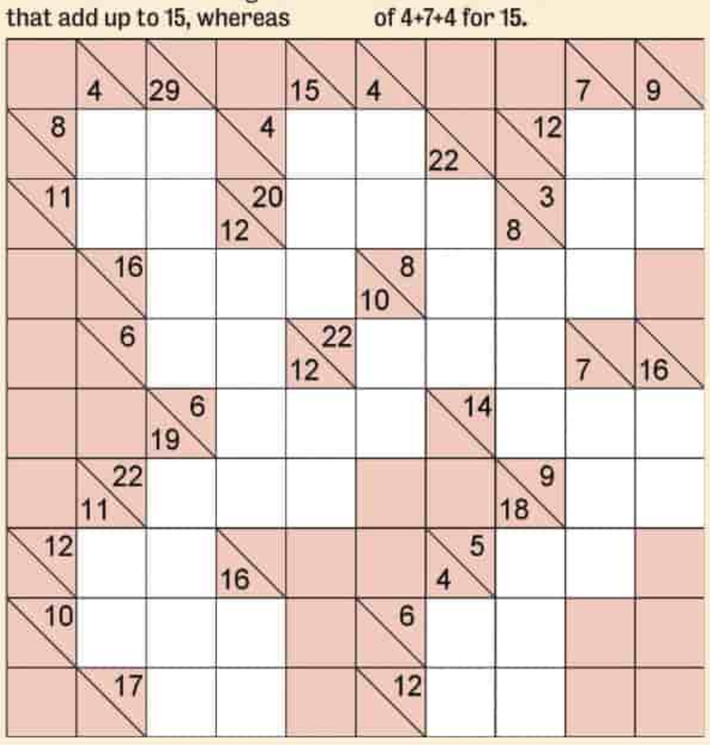
Kakuro

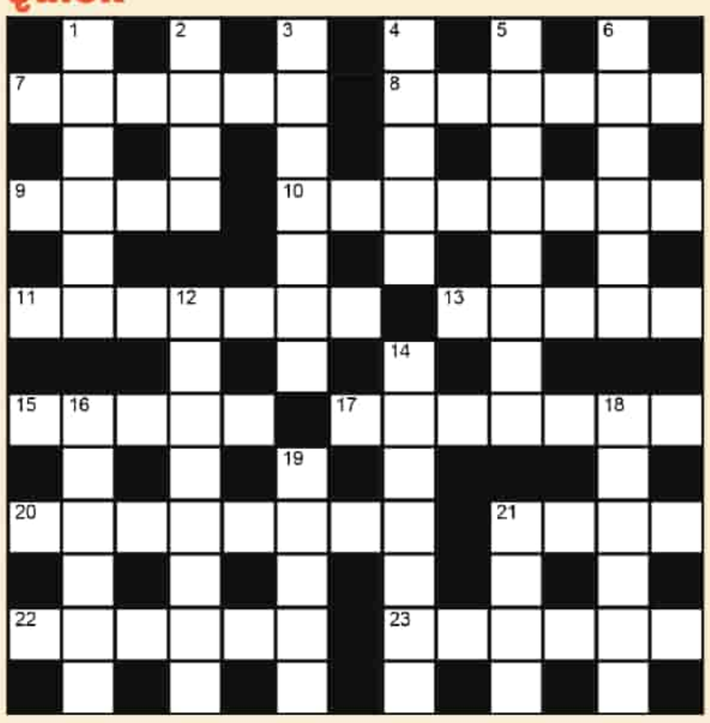
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Walk like a duck (6)
8 Big name on the internet (6)
9 Manner or bearing (4)
10 Know __ ___ : be conversant with? (3,5)
11 Refrigerator or cooler (7)
13 Nourish or nurture? (5)
15 Northernmost district of Karnataka (5)
17 Careful reading (7)
20 Entreating earnestly (8)
21 Monetary unit of Thailand (4)
22 Merges or brings together (6)
23 Roof over a doorway (6)

DOWN

1 More friendly, informally speaking? (6)
2 Arabian gulf (4)
3 Provided with a mooring? (7)
4 Consent or correspond? (5)
5 Capital of Hawaii (8)
6 Pastors' assistants (6)
12 Assess (8)
14 Antwerp native (7)
16 Place an official order (6)
18 Goddess of wisdom (6)
19 Wash in water (5)
21 Piece of a skeleton (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: Z EQUALS W

U SUNH ICH PUACI. ZUICXBI ICH KDVN, ZH'K PHJHV YHH ICH YIDVY.

Linemaro

Your earrings are the mirrors that reflect the moonlight into your eyes

Mindchow

Own more than you show, speak less than you know

Joke of the day

Never lend books, for no one ever returns them; the only books I have in my library are books that other folk have lent me

Loop

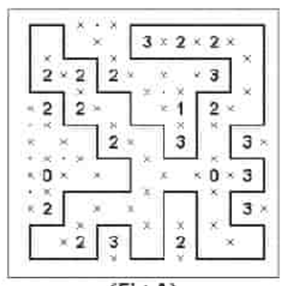
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

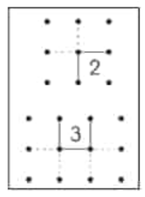
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

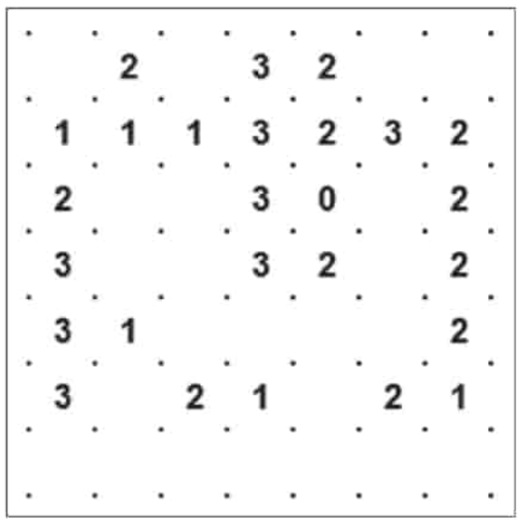
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



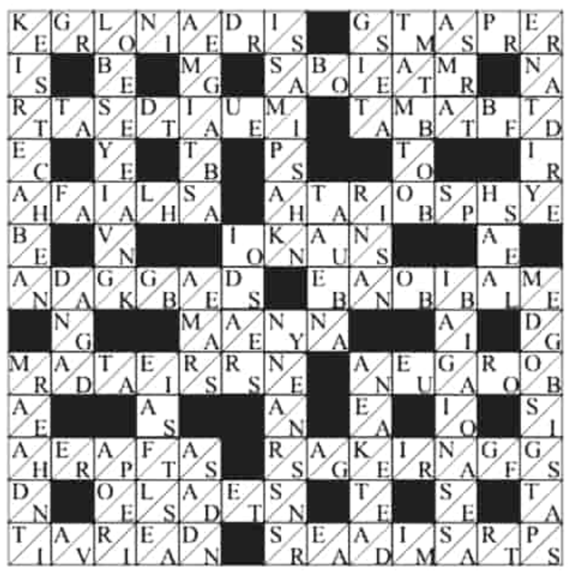
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5 Y
6				
7				
8				
9				

ACROSS

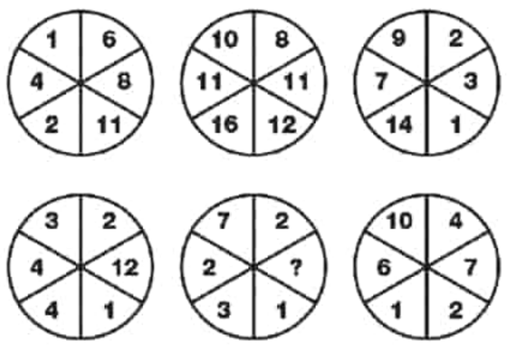
1 Study; 6 It nor; 7 To-dos; 8 Lorca; 9 O peep

DOWN

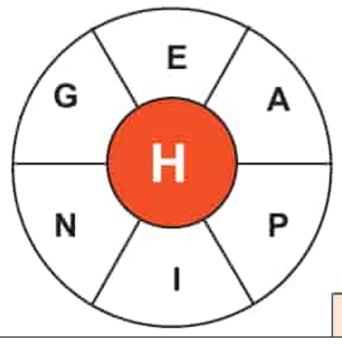
1 Is cod; 2 Unapt; 3 Rotes; 4 Or pot; 5 Doyle

Mensapuzzle

What is missing from the lower middle circle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

04 Average; 05 Good; 06 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

			2			6	8	
2		7		9	6			
	6				5			1
	5	4		3	8	7		
		6	1	5		9	4	
9			5				6	
			6	2		1		7
	3	2			4			

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 11

3 3 4 7

Medium = 17

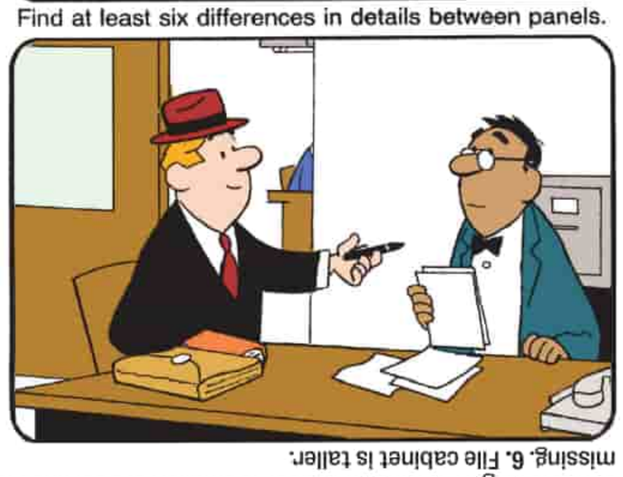
1 5 5 7

Hard = 2

4 5 8 9

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Hand is moved. 2. Back of chair is shorter. 3. Hat is larger. 4. Window in door is smaller. 5. Doorknob is missing. 6. File cabinet is taller.

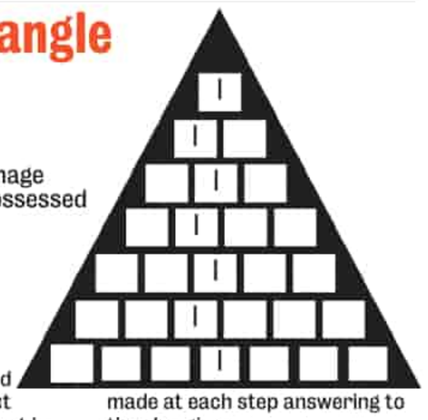
Riddler

A spoonerism is a pair of words that can have their initial sounds switched to form new words. The pairs need only sound the same, not necessarily be spelled the same. There may sometimes be one or two connecting words. Given the following definitions, what are the spoonerisms?

1) to affix a worm to the end of a fishing line & to dislike a novel
2) to move by foot at a slow gait for eight furlongs & to ridicule for an unspecified amount of time

Alpha triangle

1 Pronoun
2 Identity, abbr.
3 Expire
4 Flank
5 Engaged in espionage
6 Balanced, self-possessed
7 Went bad



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

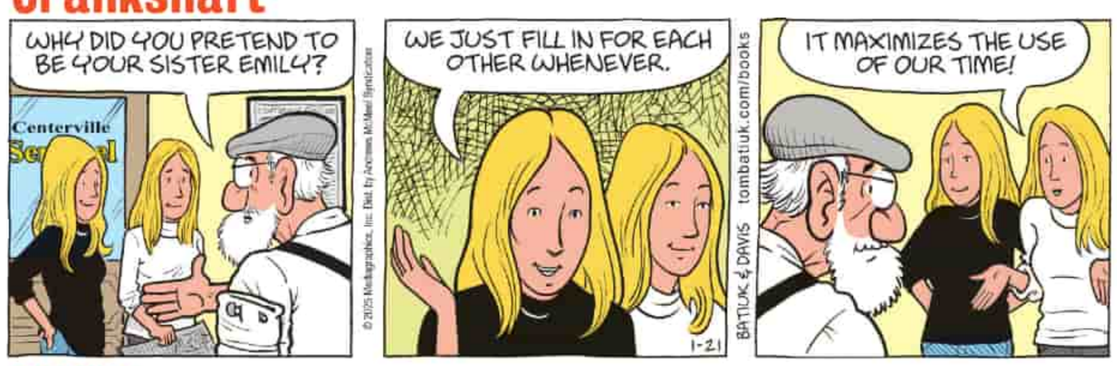
Popeye

Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

Crankshaft



Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you may make quick decisions that benefit your daily life. With support from colleagues, you might tackle difficult issues successfully. Property disputes among siblings could finally be resolved. Short trips are also on the horizon.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Be cautious with your words today, your bluntness could affect those around you. Avoid impulsive spending on unnecessary items. Although your mind is working quickly, it's best to make important decisions with patience and clarity.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
You're blessed by the Moon today. Recent disappointments may turn into joy, both personally and professionally. Your network will support you in completing delayed projects, and you may even start a new venture with help from your siblings and connections.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
You might feel surrounded by negative energy, leading to impatience and a loss of focus. Your grip on projects could weaken, possibly affecting business or work. A sense of detachment from responsibilities may disrupt your routine.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today, the Moon brings blessings. New income opportunities may arise, and past investments may start yielding profits. Financial losses are turning into gains, improving your overall financial health. Health concerns related to your parents are likely to improve.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
You may implement business plans with the support of your strong network. A major order may come through, thanks to your wisdom. Your relationship with your spouse improves, creating harmony at home. Lovebirds will enjoy a joyful day.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
The recent chaos is now under control, thanks to the Moon's blessings. You may restart postponed tasks and begin to see the rewards of your hard work. Business gains could improve your finances. You might spend on art or literature and consider overseas travel.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
You may not feel well today, and health issues could impact your professional and personal life. Concerns about your spouse's health may upset you. Your patience will be tested. Avoid new business investments, and students should stay focused and avoid distractions.

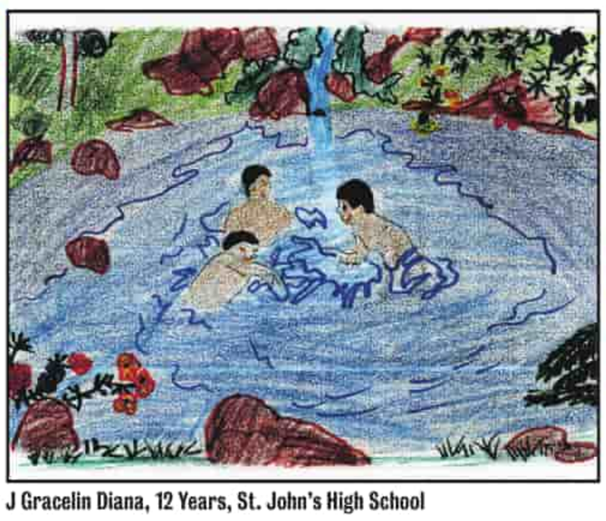
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
The Moon's blessings allow you to make quick, confident decisions at work. New business opportunities may arise, boosting your confidence. You could begin an innovative project with your partner, likely bringing growth in the near future.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
The Moon supports you today, helping you perform well at work. Promotions or job changes may be on the table, and your relationship with your boss may improve. Long-standing health issues may resolve, bringing happiness to your family.

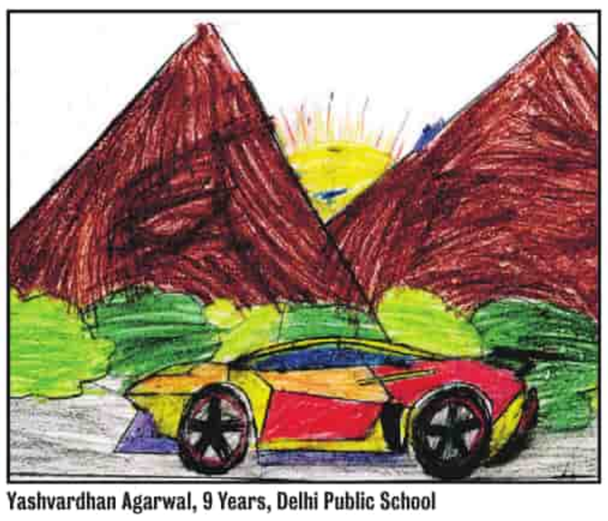
Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Things will feel stable today. You'll enjoy your work, and your sharp focus will improve your performance. Wisdom will guide you in making important professional decisions. Past investments may now begin to pay off.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
You may feel disappointed with your current circumstances at home or work. Avoid wasting money on unnecessary purchases, as it may impact your savings. You might consider relocating. Take extra care of your parents' health today.

KIDZONE



J Gracelin Diana, 12 Years, St. John's High School



Yashvardhan Agarwal, 9 Years, Delhi Public School

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
9-8/12)×6/5 =
1/12 × 6/5 = 1/2 ×1/5 =
1/10 = 0.1

RIDDLER
1) bait a hook & hate
a book &
2) walk a mile &
mock a while

QUOTE UNCODE
I like the night.
Without the dark,
we'd never see the
stars.

FAST FIVE

D	U	S	T	Y
I	N	T	R	O
S	T	O	O	D
C	A	R	O	L
O	P	E	P	E

BULL'S EYE
hang, heap,
HEAPING, hinge,
neigh, nigh

STRIKE OUT

I	V	I	E	D	■	S	A	D	I	S	T	S	■	■
D	■	O	L	D	E	N	■	E	■	T	■	■	■	■
H	E	P	T	A	■	R	A	K	I	N	G	S	■	■
A	■	S	■	A	■	A	■	O	■	I	■	■	■	■
M	A	T	I	S	S	E	■	N	E	G	R	O	■	■
■	■	G	■	M	A	Y	A	■	I	■	G	■	■	■
N	A	G	G	E	D	■	B	A	B	B	L	E	■	■
E	■	N	■	O	N	U	S	■	A	■	■	■	■	■
H	A	I	L	S	■	A	T	R	O	P	H	Y	■	■
C	■	Y	■	T	■	P	■	O	■	■	■	R	■	■
T	A	E	D	I	U	M	■	A	B	A	F	T	■	■
I	■	B	■	M	■	A	B	E	A	M	■	N	■	■
K	R	O	N	E	R	S	■	S	T	A	R	E	■	■

QUICK

■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
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■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

MENSA PUZZLE
5. The values in the segments of the upper middle circle equal the sum of the values in corresponding segments of the upper left and right hand circles, and the values in the segments of the lower middle circle equal the difference between values in corresponding segments of the lower left and right hand circles.

SUDOKU

5	4	3	2	7	1	6	8	9
2	1	7	8	9	6	3	5	4
8	6	9	3	4	5	2	7	1
1	5	4	9	3	8	7	2	6
3	2	6	1	5	7	9	4	8
9	7	1	5	8	3	4	6	2
4	8	5	6	2	9	1	3	7
6	3	2	4	1	7	8	9	5

ALPHA TRIANGLE
I, Id, Die, Side,
Sped, Poised,
Spoiled.

GO FIGURE
Easy
3 – 3 + 4 + 7 = 11
Medium
5 + 5 x 1 + 7 = 17
Hard
9 + 5 – 4 – 8 = 2

LOOP

KAKURO

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Female solidarity — Actress Salma Hayek says she and Penelope Cruz both offered huge support to one another as they tried to make it in Hollywood as actresses from Mexico and Spain, respectively. She said that female solidarity has been her strength

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Entertainment Industry Promotion

It's a match?

Fans find similarity in vacay photos of Triptii and Sam Merchant

Triptii Dimri, who rose to fame with her impressive performance in 'Animal' alongside Ranbir Kapoor, has been in the media spotlight for both her career and personal life. While rumours about her relationship with Sam Merchant have been circulating for a while, the two have never openly confirmed their bond. However, their latest posts from a beach vacation have sparked more speculation about the nature of their relationship. With their stunning beach pictures, both actors seem to be enjoying a peaceful holiday together, fueling the ongoing rumours.

Triptii's glowing beach moments

Triptii Dimri took to Instagram to share beautiful images of herself against a backdrop of a serene sunset. She looked radiant in a two-piece outfit, with the soft evening light accentuating her natural beauty. In the post, she captured the essence of the moment, captioning it, "A moment to just pause," as she basked in the warm hues of the sky. The actress appeared to be fully immersed in the tranquility of the moment, and fans couldn't help but notice how the serene pictures reflect her contentment.

Sam Merchant confirms?

In an interesting twist, Sam Merchant shared his own set of beach photos, which closely mirrored Triptii's. One particular image showed a couple taking selfies by the beach, subtly confirming the possibility that they are indeed holidaying together. While neither of them has directly commented on their relationship status, their social media posts have made it clear that they are spending time together, sparking further curiosity about their personal lives.

While her personal life is a topic of intrigue, Triptii Dimri's professional life is equally exciting. She is gearing up to star alongside Madhuri Dixit in the upcoming comedy-drama 'Ma Behan', a project fans are eagerly anticipating after their successful collaboration in 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3'. On the other hand, Triptii has not been able to mark a good successful film after the Ranbir Kapoor starrer 'Animal', yet, as several of her movies after that turned out to be underwhelming.

—ETimes

SANDALWOOD SHOTS

Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Mind-bending movie!

There is no dearth for experimental movies in Sandalwood and Green is the latest in this list. The film's cast and crew unveiled its teaser at SRV Theatre on Saturday. Green is scheduled to arrive in theaters next month. Raaj Vijay debuts as a director in Sandalwood with this movie. "I have been praying to God since my childhood to help me become a director. Prior to this, I worked as associate director for a few Kannada movies. Green is a mind-bending psychological thriller. It is about a protagonist who struggles to face a monster within him," said Raaj Vijay.

He said the movie is set in a forest. "This movie was screened at some film festivals where it was appreciated. I hope Kannada moviegoers will support this movie," he said. Apart from handling the megaphone, Raaj has also joined hands with BN Swamy to bankroll this movie that features an ensemble of cast including Gopal Krishna Deshpande, Balaji Manohar, RJ Vikki, Vishwanath Mandalika, and Shiva Manju.

Teaser unveiled

The teaser of Ekka, the second movie of Yuva Rajkumar, was unveiled on April 24. The movie's teaser was to be unveiled on April 23 which happened to be Yuva Rajkumar's birthday but it was postponed due to the Pahalgam terror attack.

The teaser's duration is one minute and nine seconds. Yuva Rajkumar is seen holding a broom and delivering dialogues – Magu-Mruga – and it conveys a message stating that it will not stop at this point, thus creating curiosity among moviegoers. The movie is directed by Rohit Padaki. The movie features Sampada, Sanjana Anand, Atul Kulkarni, Shruthi Krishna, Aditya, and Rahul Dev Shetty. Satya Hegde worked as cinematographer for this movie which is scheduled to arrive in theaters on June 6. Charan Raj has scored its music.

Ekka is a collaborative project among Karthik Gowda and Yogi G Rao of KRG Studios, Ashwini Puneeth Rajkumar of PRK Productions, and Jayanna and Bogendra of Jayanna Films.

Aish was no fan of 'bikini round'

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, the former Miss World and Bollywood icon, once spoke candidly about her experience at the 1994 Miss World pageant and shared her thoughts on the controversial bikini round. Aishwarya, who won the coveted title, revealed that she didn't have the "best beach body" compared to her fellow contestants, but that didn't stop her from winning.

" I was definitely not the best beach body of all the 87 contestants" mentions a report in Bollywood Shaadis. During a media interaction, Aishwarya admitted that despite not having the most perfect physique, she won the title. She said, "When I became

Miss World, I was definitely not the best beach body of all the 87 contestants. I can vouch for it, I can put a stamp on it. And yet I won the title.

Aishwarya's statement came in the wake of Julia Morley's decision to eliminate the swimsuit round from the Miss World competition in 2014. The actress expressed her happiness over this change and reflected on how beauty pageants should focus on more than just physical appearance. She explained that beauty contests aren't solely about physical beauty but about how a contestant presents themselves, their confidence, and their overall character.

—ETimes

Smile please

Actress Sobhita Dhulipala, known for her effortless charm and candid social media presence, recently delighted her fans with a fresh set of photos that offered a glimpse into her cozy Sunday with husband, actor Naga Chaitanya.

"The grass is green where you water it" she captioned the laidback pictures that captured moments of serenity, self-love, and adorable couple vibes. Among the many photos was one of Sobhita lounging on lush grass, sporting a no-makeup look that highlighted her natural beauty. What truly stole hearts was a sweet handwritten note from Chaitanya that read, "Sulky Face, don't forget to smile." The affectionate nickname and the thoughtful gesture instantly had fans swooning over their bond.

Netizens react

The post was soon flooded with comments that read, "Life is beautiful." Another comment read, "Your posts are always mesmerising." A third comment read, "Was that Note written by Chay?? Looking Gorgeous BTW ."

Sobhita and Naga Chaitanya's relationship has been a subject of public interest, especially after the actor's highly publicised divorce from Samantha Ruth Prabhu.

Chay found love again with Sobhita in 2022, and after keeping their relationship relatively private, the couple married in a small, intimate ceremony at Annapurna Studios in Hyderabad in 2024. On the work front, Naga Chaitanya is gearing up for his next film directed by Karthik Varma Dandu. His previous outing was 'Thandel'.

—ETimes